

Placerville

# Mountain Democrat

## Thousands Volunteer for Great Sierra River Cleanup

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**NICK PRETE, 17, from Ponderosa High School, gets down and dirty in Hangtown Creek in Placerville on Sept. 15 as part of the fourth annual Great Sierra River Cleanup project. He joined a group of about 50 El Dorado and Ponderosa High School students who spent the morning cleaning trash around the creek area. Democrat photo by Pat Dollins**

About 2,800 volunteers collected approximately 90,000 pounds of trash, appliances, car parts and other debris during the fourth annual Great Sierra River Cleanup on Sept. 15. The event was sponsored by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) in partnership with 47 community organizations throughout the Sierra Nevada. A full listing can be found on the SNC Website at [SierraNevada.ca.gov](http://SierraNevada.ca.gov).

“About two-thirds of Californians get their water from the Sierra, so it is noteworthy that so many volunteers take part in cleaning up our rivers, lakes and streams,” said SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham. “In just four years, the Great Sierra River Cleanup has removed 571 tons of trash and debris from our watersheds.”

Volunteers scoured beaches and riverbanks to collect paper trash, aluminum cans, plastic bags, cigarette butts, cardboard, glass bottles and other items. Some of the more interesting items removed during this year's cleanup include a rubber chicken, a four-piece wooden toilet with a duck-taped seat, a concrete statue of a rabbit, and an old-fashioned lamp post.

The Great Sierra River Cleanup took place at some 100 sites in the Sierra, and virtually every watershed was included. The event began in 2009 in conjunction with the annual California Coastal Cleanup event. Combined, the two events make up the largest annual one-day volunteer event in California.

Sponsors for this year's Great Sierra River Cleanup included PG&E, the California Ski Industry Association, Sierra Pacific Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy.

The Great Sierra River Cleanup 2012 was also supported by the California Coastal Commission, the Ocean Conservancy, Crystal Geyser, Nature's Path and Whole Foods Market. This event is made possible by the hard work of hundreds of local nonprofits and government agencies throughout the state and thousands of volunteers annually.